

October 18, 2000

**The FBI's Newly Released Data**

## **Violent Crimes and "Hate Crimes" in 1999**

The official Uniform Crime Reports for 1999 were released this week. Because the President, the Vice President, Senator Kennedy, and others are still trying to get "hate-crimes" language attached to a bill that the President can sign this year, a review of the latest data will be useful. And, because tomorrow has been designated by some groups as "National Hate Crimes Call-in to Congress Day," this review may be especially timely and helpful.

The raw numbers do not, of course, tell us what *moral* weight ought to be attached to various crimes. Supporters of a new "hate-crimes" law believe that all officially designated "hate crimes" are more harmful than other crimes and ought, therefore, to be entitled to greater moral weight (and the attentions of the Federal Government). That claim stretches credulity.

Is *every* "hate crime" more harmful than *any other* crime of the same kind? Is it possible to believe that *each* of the 17 "hate-crimes" murders committed in 1999 was more harmful than *any* of the 15,516 other murders? Is *every* "hate crime" (of whatever kind) more harmful than *any other* crime not so categorized? Is it possible to believe that *each* of the 129 "hate-crimes" robberies committed in 1999 was more harmful than, say, *any* of the 915,263 aggravated assaults that were not officially designated as "hate crimes"? If not, how do we explain that under Senator Kennedy's "hate-crimes" bill *all* of the 129 robbery victims but *none* of the 915,263 victims of aggravated assault would have access to the United States Department of Justice? (Indeed, an *attempt* to cause bodily injury to one of the 129 can qualify for help from DoJ while *actual, completed* bodily injury to the 915,263 will not suffice.) Is the cumulative effect of "hate crimes" more harmful than the cumulative effect of all other crimes combined? There were about 1,124 violent crimes committed in 1999 for every *one* violent crime that was an official "hate crime". Which class of crime caused more harm?

The raw numbers may not answer the moral questions, but the facts can help us think more clearly about the answers. A summary of the data for 1999 is shown below:

### **Murder**

***During 1999, an average of 1 murder was committed every 34 minutes. About every 3 weeks, 1 murder was attributed to officially designated "hate".***

<u>Number of All Offenses</u>	<u>Rate per 100,000</u>	<u>Number of "Hate Crimes"</u>	<u>Rate per 100,000</u>	<u>Ratio of All Murders To "Hate Crime" Murders</u>
15,533	5.7	17	0.0062	914 : 1

- 205 children under the age of one year were murdered in 1999.
- 580 children under the age of eight years were murdered in 1999.
- 125 persons were murdered by fire, and 190 were strangled.
- 542 wives were murdered by their husbands, and 156 husbands by their wives.
- 26 females and 78 males were murdered by a sibling.
- 99 murderers killed their own mother, and 135 murderers killed their own father.
- 45 females were murdered during a rape.
- 32 children were murdered by their babysitters.
- 1,010 persons were murdered during a robbery, and 17 during a gambling dispute.
- 154 black victims were murdered by whites, and 452 white victims by blacks.

### **Rape**

*During 1999, an average of 1 rape was committed every 6 minutes. (An estimated 64 of every 100,000 females in the country were victims of reported rape in 1999.) About once every 2 months, 1 rape was attributed to "hate".*

<u>Number of All Offenses</u>	<u>Rate per 100,000</u>	<u>Number of "Hate Crimes"</u>	<u>Rate per 100,000</u>	<u>Ratio of All Rapes To "Hate Crime" Rapes</u>
89,107	32.7	6	0.0022	14,851 : 1

### **Robbery**

*During 1999, an average of 1 robbery was committed every minute. About every 3 days, 1 of those robberies was attributed to officially designated "hate".*

<u>Number of All Offenses</u>	<u>Rate per 100,000</u>	<u>Number of "Hate Crimes"</u>	<u>Rate per 100,000</u>	<u>Ratio of All Robberies To "Hate-Crime" Robberies</u>
409,670	150.2	129	0.0473	3,176 : 1

### **Aggravated Assault**

*During 1999, an average of 1 aggravated assault was committed every 34 seconds. About every 8 hours, one of those assaults was attributed to "hate".*

<u>Number of All Offenses</u>	<u>Rate per 100,000</u>	<u>Number of "Hate Crimes"</u>	<u>Rate per 100,000</u>	<u>Ratio of All Aggravated Assaults to "Hate-Crime" Aggravated Assaults</u>
916,383	336.1	1,120	0.4107	818 : 1

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Source: U.S. Dept of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States, 1999* (also known as the *Uniform Crimes Reports*), release date Oct. 15, 2000.